



CALFED
BAY-DELTA
PROGRAM

NEWS...

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Californians Asked to Decide State's Water Future

This February, Californians will have an unprecedented opportunity to weigh in on a decision that will affect the state for generations to come -- how to resolve the environmental and water management problems of the Bay-Delta.

"We need additional public input on the issues we're grappling with to make a definitive decision," said Lester Snow, executive director of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. "There are trade-offs associated with each of the options on the table, and we must inform the public about those trade-offs so they can tell us what is most important to them."

CALFED will release a draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement in February which describes the alternatives and their strengths and weaknesses. The draft will also clearly identify the alternative with the greatest technical advantages and the associated issues of concern.

CALFED is working to develop a solution to water quality, water supply reliability, levee system integrity and ecological degradation problems that affect the Bay-Delta system. Each option being looked at addresses these four core areas, but differs in how it proposes to move and store water in the system. Over the past several months potential solutions underwent intense scrutiny by CALFED staff and stakeholders through technical working groups, modeling studies, pre-feasibility studies and impact analysis. This process identified the strengths and weaknesses of each potential solution. For example, some solutions have a higher cost, but improve the system's flexibility. Others substantially improve drinking water quality but raise concern over how to ensure the system is



A series of informational workshops and public hearings will be held throughout the state to solicit additional public input.

operated in a responsible manner. "Now we are looking to the public to weigh in on the trade-offs they are willing to make to ensure a healthy environment and a safe and reliable water supply for the future," said Snow.

What's Next?

CALFED will proceed with a series of public hearings on the draft PEIR/PEIS this spring, *continued from front* soliciting input on all three potential solutions. Then, in late summer CALFED will choose a preferred alternative. The timeline for final approval by the Governor and the Secretary of the Interior remains late 1998.

Solution Principles ...

The Bay-Delta solution must be affordable, equitable, durable, implementable, reduce conflicts in the system and pose no significant redirected impacts.

Bay-Delta Accord Extended

State and federal officials have announced a one year extension of the historic Bay-Delta Accord, in which the competing interests in the Bay-Delta system agreed to lay down their arms while a consensus-based solution was developed. The extension reaffirms their dedication to working with the state's agricultural, urban and environmental communities to develop a workable solution to the state's major water problems. This consensus-based approach to resolving resource conflicts is being looked at as a model for other areas in the nation. The additional year is intended to allow sufficient time for CALFED to complete the plan and undergo environmental review without the distraction of other water-related conflicts.

package. Additional funds will be made available in 1998 for a variety of restoration projects such as fish screens at pumping plants, habitat purchases, riparian restoration and pollution controls.

*If you know of a group that would like a presentation about the efforts to fix the Bay-Delta, please call (916) 657-2666.



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\$100 Million Invested in Restoration

CALFED has announced 50 ecosystem restoration projects to receive a total of \$100 million in state, federal and private funding as part of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. This represents the first round of funding for a commitment contained in the 1994 Bay-Delta Accord. The commitment, known as "Category III," makes possible the early implementation of projects that benefit the environment prior to the completion of the complete Bay-Delta solution

The mission of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program is to develop a long-term plan that will restore ecological health and improve water management for beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta System.